

# Flight Jacket



Vol. 3, No. 11

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar

March 23, 2001

## MACS-1 up and running, ready to move to Miramar

By Cpl. C.A. Eriksen

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

On a hillside in the distance over East Miramar stands a twirling piece of metal. What is it?

It's an Army and Navy Tactical Radar Surveillance (AN/TPS) 59 (V)3 long-range surveillance radar operated by Marine Air Control Squadron 1 from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., and it's ready to conduct business.

MACS-1 is looking to move a detachment here permanently in connection with the radar site.

The radar is part of MACS-1 Tactical Air Operations Center Early Warning and Control center that conducted its first controlled flight March 15.

The Early Warning and Control center's primary responsibilities are to provide ground controlled intercepts, tactical air traffic control, surveillance, identification of threat aircraft and theater ballistic missiles and data link operations with other surveillance agencies.

The EW/C has been set up in response to an increasing need for training in ground control intercepts for both ground personnel and pilots. There is a need for an EW/C detachment for fixed-wing squadrons here at Miramar that provides training opportunities for the EW/C marines and the pilots, accord-

ing to Capt. Paul M. Schneider, MACS-1 project officer.

Training is done on a time-sharing basis at Yuma where as at Miramar it is dedicated to the squadrons. This will be more beneficial for the EW/C Marines, according to Sgt. Curtis W. Hornback, Tactical Air Operations Module Air Intercept controller.

Currently MACS-1 deploys a small contingency of Marines from MCAS Yuma for short durations to provide ground control intercept support here. The EW/C is to be manned on a more permanent basis because MACS-1 is in the process of establishing a detachment. The detachment will be composed of 13 Marines from Yuma by the end of this summer. The final strength is to be approximately 81 Marines.

"It takes a lot of people to make it happen," said Schneider about the final strength for the detachment.

Most of the Marines currently assigned to the early warning and control center liked the idea of moving here.

"The base is beautiful and San Diego is great," said Lance Cpl. Aaron W. Redden, radar repairman of Syracuse, N.Y.

Staff Sgt. Brian D. Matheny, Early Warning Control site SNCOIC likes the idea of a detachment here at Miramar, and said "Flying squadrons don't get to have ground controlled intercepts unless they go to Weapons and Tactics Instruction."



**This long-range radar in East Miramar will help MACS-1's EW/C provide ground intercept training aboard Miramar among other things.**

Photo by Cpl. Rob Henderson



### The circus comes to town

Alex Chimal, Circus Chimera juggler, awes the crowd with his skillful dexterity, juggling four bowling pins, as his assistant, Miriam Chimal, looks on. Circus Chimera performed in front of the commissary March 18 and 19 to

crowds of children and grown-ups alike. In addition to the Euro-style circus, the attractions included a miniature midway and pony rides. No animals performed in the show.

Photo by Cpl. Scott Whittington

## Miramar shows who's top dog at Yuma K-9 competition

By Sgt. Carolyn S. Sittig

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Two of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar military working dog handlers secured a major win for Miramar after taking home the top honors in the recent 14th Annual MCAS Yuma, Ariz., K-9 Trials.

Lance Cpl. James Brenneis, a Fremont, native, and Cpl. Ryan Stacy, a Wichita, Kan., native, Miramar military working dog handlers, secured personal awards and left bearing the title "Top Agency" out of nine agencies competing in the trials.

The Top Agency award is given to the agency with the highest number of points accumulated throughout the competition.

Sgt. John Pantoja, military working dog handler, said that Miramar's dog handlers have always returned from competitions with personal awards, but this is the first time they have been named, "Top Agency."

For both Marines this was their first competition and coming home with such awards came as a surprise, said Brenneis. "We were competing against many agencies that engage in real-life scenarios - things we only train for on a daily basis," he explained.

Agencies like the Border Patrol, whose working dog handlers get to apprehend suspects on a daily basis were the fierce competition Miramar's Marines faced. Because the trials are judged based on real-life scenarios, Brenneis was more surprised that they unseated such experienced agencies like the Border Patrol by securing the top honors.

"I feel we are fortunate enough to have not only the top handlers, but the top K-9's certainly in Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area, if not in the Marine Corps," said Lt. Col. Tommy L. Hester, Miramar Provost Marshal and a Tuscaloosa, Ala., native.

Brenneis and Stacy participated in numerous categories: area search, bomb search, building search, explosive search, handler protection, obstacle course, and pistol/tactical obedience.

Stacy said the one thing he worried about was getting his dog to do the right thing amidst all the distractions like the people, food and a new environment. As hoped, he and his dog proved that their training pays off. One event that was probably the most difficult was the pistol/tactical obedience.

See Dog, page 11



# MACG-38 changes hands

By Cpl. Mike Camacho

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Lieutenant Col. Paul K. Hilton relinquished command of Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 to Lt. Col. Rodney H. Taplin, during a change of command ceremony March 14 on the parade deck here.

Hilton, a native of the Los Angeles, has commanded the squadron since June 18, 1999. His next assignment will be to serve as the Marine Corps liaison for the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, San Diego.

"For about 350 Marines we're doing a ton of communications service and support," said Hilton. "These Marines do a great job everyday, and I thank them for all the work that we've done."

Taplin has been with 3d Marine Aircraft Wing since August last year where he has been serving as the staff action officer for the assistant chief of staff for plans and operations.

"As Abraham Lincoln said 'I'm going to do my best and I'm going to do it until the very end,' and that's the same thing that I'm going to expect out of this squadron," said Taplin. "I guarantee this squadron will remain focused on combat readiness, because,

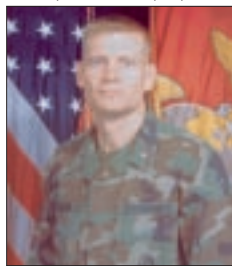
make no mistake, this squadron is going to have the opportunity to go do some great things."

Taplin, a native of Zion, Ohio, has 17 years of service under his belt. He earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from the University of Illinois and a Master of Military Studies degree from Marine Corps University. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in May 1983.

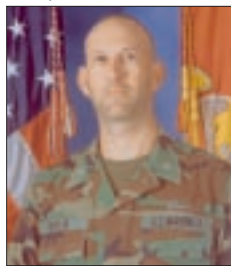
Through his career, Taplin has served with at least seven different commands.

His personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Navy Achievement Medal.

Taplin is married to the former Maria Hummel of Peoria, Ill. They have two children, Mitchel, 8, and Ellie, 4.



Lt. Col.  
Paul K. Hilton



Lt. Col.  
Rodney H. Taplin

## Disability Advisory Council works to destroy myths

By Sgt. A.C. Strong

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Miramar's Disability Advisory Council held its inaugural meeting March 7, at the air station Friendship Center. Marine Corps and Navy personnel, family members, civilian personnel, command representatives, and representatives from groups such as Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Naval Medical Center San Diego, the Armed Services YMCA and the New Parent Support Program attended the session.

The committee's mission is to link family members and organizations in an effort to determine what resources and guidance are required to meet Quality of Life needs and other issues of air station family members with disabilities.

"We are working to dispel the myths of being involved in the Exceptional Family Member Program," said Gunnery Sgt. Shawn Keating, exceptional family member program coordinator. "Marines need to know what is fact and what is misconception. This committee can be a part of that process."

Creation of the committee is the final item on the list of priorities set up by Marine Corps Community Services during the transition of the air station from El Toro to Miramar.

Enrollment in the exceptional family member program is mandatory under Marine Corps Order P1754.4A, but according to Keating, some servicemembers avoid enrolling in the program because of common misconceptions such as "I won't be able to reenlist."

"Our way of life can be challenging and stressful to our families," said Gen. James L. Jones, Commandant of the Marine Corps in a white letter dated Jan. 25. "This is particularly true for families who have special needs such as severe medical conditions or special educational learning requirements."

In the letter, the commandant directly charges Marine Corps leadership to recognize and emphasize their roles to create a learning, informed, and understanding environment. He says, "Leaders, at all levels, need to not only be aware of EFMP, but actively refer Marines."

## Miramar honored for superb environmental efforts

By Sgt. A.C. Strong

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

The Secretary of the Navy named Marine Corps Air Station Miramar runner-up in the Large Installation category of the Secretary of Navy Environmental Awards Competition for fiscal year 2000. Award winners will be recognized in a ceremony at the Navy Memorial, Washington, May 2.

Monday's announcement named Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., the first place Large Installation winner.

Other Marine Corps award winners included:

Small Installation — Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.

Individual/ Team — Ron Kinlaw, MCRD Parris Island, S.C.

Cultural Resources Management — MCB Camp Pendleton.

Individual/ Team — MCB Hawaii.

Environmental Quality — MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.

Non-Industrial Installation — MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Overseas Installation — MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan.

Pollution Prevention Industrial Installation — Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow.

Pollution Prevention Non-Industrial Installation — MCB Camp Pendleton.

Pollution Prevention Individual/ Team — MCB Hawaii

## TA and VA join to form 'Top Up'

By Sgt. A.C. Strong

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

"There's no such thing as a free lunch," but what about a free education? With Congress approving the use of Tuition Assistance and the Montgomery GI Bill for the same class that may be possible.

The new program, dubbed "Top-Up," allows servicemembers to receive payment from the Veterans Affairs for tuition charges not covered by TA.

"Basically, TA covers up to \$3,500 per year," said Gunnery Sgt. Donald J. Finn, staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge of education and alternate test control officer. "The MGIB, with a cap of \$650 per month, kicks in for the rest."

It's not a free ride, however. According to Finn, students are expected to pay for books and anything not cov-

See **Education \$**, page 11

## Flight Jacket



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Commanding General  
3d Marine Aircraft Wing

**Maj. Gen. William G. Bowdon**

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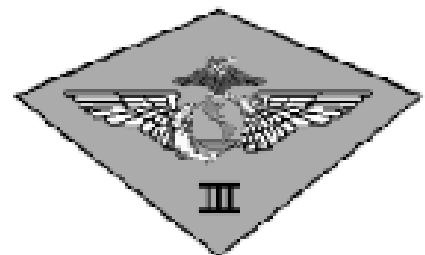
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Combat Correspondents



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MirRemarks

What teams do you think will make it to the Final Four?



“Michigan State, Arizona, Duke and I have to pick the cinderella team, Gonzaga.”

Cpl. Edmundo G. Calderon  
MWSS-373  
toolroom NCOIC



“I don’t care who makes it. I want Stanford all the way.”

Cpl. Justin Firor  
MWSS-373  
heavy equipment operator



“Duke, Gonzaga, Temple and Stanford. I would like to see the cinderella team take it, but we’ll see.”

Sgt. Steve D. Martinez  
H&HS  
subsistence clerk

Check e-mail facts before forwarding

By Cpl. Rob Henderson

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

I hate feeling like an idiot. More so, I hate making others feel stupid. Lately, I seem to have done both frequently, and I feel the need to set the record straight.

Recently, quite a few “urban legends” have been forwarded to me via my government e-mail account. With little or no thought, I forwarded the stories to my on-line “buddies.” When I spent a very few minutes researching the origins of the myths I had forwarded, I found that most of the stories were lies. Now, I have to e-mail my contacts and let them know my sources were unreliable and the stories were pure drivel.

Many Marines and Sailors here, myself included, received the e-mail regarding the crew of HMX-1, the president’s helicopter. The e-mail charged the Marines with disrespect towards President Clinton during his administration. An excerpt from the e-mail

reads: “CNN this morning showed (President) George W. Bush leaving HMX-1. The Marine at the front step saluted. President Bush returned it, and as he walked away, the Marine executed a right face to stand facing (President Bush’s) back – something that was missing in the eight years of the Clinton presidency.”

The charges are bogus, and they reflect discredit upon the Marine Corps. I forwarded the message as a point of interest and never thought to check my facts. The crew of HMX-1 never departed from their display of military customs and courtesies during the Clinton administration.

By forwarding the lies, I brought further discredit upon the crew and the Marine

Corps. It’s the small actions that hurt us as a whole.

Less close to home, I have received numerous other “urban legends” through e-mail. Every rumor from the “Hanoi Jane” incident to charging taxes or fees for sending e-mail has passed through my inbox. Like the HMX-1 story, I forwarded the message. Like the HMX-1 story, I felt stupid when I found out the truth.

The moral to this story is: Never forward your e-mail before checking the facts. Make sure the sender is a reliable source, and even then, check your facts. Not only will you make yourself look stupid by sending false e-mails, but you could also be reflecting discredit upon our Corps.



SAVE ENERGY

We may need it later

Ad Space



## Be ready for moving day

By Michelle Osborn

LINKS, MCAS Miramar

Moving day ... every Marine family will have one ... or two ... or three ... or more. Being married to a Marine means that you may have to relocate from time to time. But moving offers a great opportunity to dust off the top of your entertainment center, rediscover and perhaps donate the items that are still in boxes from the last move and to count your blessings, past and future.

It may seem like only yesterday that you were the newcomer to the neighborhood. Do you remember stepping into an empty apartment, house or base housing unit and waiting anxiously for all of your things to arrive at your doorstep? Can you recall the moment when that neighbor who happened over to meet "the new people

on the block" turned into a treasured friend?

While you're "outbound," remind yourself that there are many reasons to look forward to being "inbound." There are new friends to make, new things to see and new things to do.

Take the move as an opportunity to make the first step. Imagine the surprise of your neighbors when you knock on their door with a plate of cookies to introduce yourself. The road goes both ways and this simple act of kindness may just turn a bunch of people who live beside each other into a friendly, thriving community.

Don't worry about those friends who you think you are leaving behind. If they are true friends, they'll still be your friends no matter where the Marine Corps takes you – or them.

See **LINKS**, page 11

# School of hard knocks

*Learning about drinking and driving the hard way*

By Sgt. Maj. Stephen H. Mellinger

MARFORPAC

CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii - Have you ever wondered why people choose to learn life's most valuable lessons the hard way? Most of us insist on enrolling into the school of hard knocks instead of relying on the wisdom of others who know what's best for us.

As a youngster growing up on a farm, I didn't accept my buddy's wisdom concerning electric fences. He and I were playing in the field when I had to relieve myself. He noticed that I was taking aim at the strand of wire of an electric fence. "Steve," he said, "You really don't want to do that. The electricity will travel from the wire to you and shock the heck out of you!"

Call me stubborn (or stupid), but I didn't heed his advice. After all, who died and made him the "electrical expert?" So without hesitation I took aim and let it fly. Big mistake!

It was several minutes before my eyes refocused and I was able to pick myself up off of the ground. Now that's truly a school of hard knocks lesson that I will never forget.

There's one of life's lessons that too many Marines seem to want to learn the hard way. It concerns the combination of drinking and drinking.

In the first quarter of this year eight Marines lost their lives needlessly in vehicle accidents. Alcohol was a contributing factor in most of those fatalities.

How tragic it is that each year the Corps loses so many outstanding Marines because they chose the school of hard knocks to learn not to drink and drive. And I'm not just speaking about losing them to death or serious injuries that end their careers.

I'm also referring to those decent Marines with outstanding service records and many with great families who learn the hard way that a DUI can end their military career.

What happens to a family when the military member (financial provider) receives a DUI?

First, they stand to lose money from a stripe or two being taken away. Next, will their budget afford an insurance premium increase of up to several thousand dollars per year? Possible suspended driving privileges for a year is another great hardship thrust onto their families. For those of you who don't believe it'll ever happen to you, read on.

There was a staff sergeant (stationed on Okinawa on an accompanied tour). He had a wife and four children, coached children's sports, was active in the church and in short was a role model in every way.

He was attending his SNCO Academy's Mess Night (Camp Hansen club) one day prior to his graduation as number one in his class.

As a rule he never drank, but (peer pressure) he did this night. He only had five beers, but he carried his last one into his vehicle to drive back to his barracks (just three blocks away) from the SNCO club.

A military policeman on patrol observed him getting into his vehicle, with an open beer bottle, and driving out of the parking lot. The rest, as we say, is history!

He was charged with DUI and dropped from the SNCO Academy with a double-

signed fitness report. His driving privileges were revoked for one year (his wife didn't drive). Last, but not least, he "was" selected for gunnery sergeant on that year's board.

He had planned to make the Corps a 30-year career. However, because of this offense his promotion to gunny was denied and he was forced to retire as a staff sergeant with 20 years of service.

Please indulge me as I attempt to hammer home this Marine's ultimate school of hard knocks lesson learned. Using a hypothetical 30-year formula from the time of his retirement (date of his retirement was changed to Dec. 31, to keep the tracking for you simple. Also, I'm not including any Basic Allowance for Housing, Basic Allowance for Subsistence, etc. in any of my computations), you can see what the DUI ultimately cost him and his family.

He was forced to retire on Dec. 31. His promotion to gunny would have been Jan. 1. The now retired staff sergeant, let's say, has a life expectancy of approximately 30 years (2031).

The staff sergeant will receive a monthly check for the next 30 years at the rate of 50% of his base salary at time of retirement. Using only our current pay scale he would receive a yearly retirement salary of \$14,207.40. He would earn \$426,222 over the next 30 years.

Let's say that if he had not received the DUI he would have been promoted to rank of gunny Jan. 1, and had a continued military career. I estimate that it would have taken him three years (rough guess) before he would have been promoted to the rank of first sergeant.

During the time he would have been a gunny he would have received a yearly base salary of \$34,689.60 (gunnery sergeant with more than 22 years active service). His three years as a gunny would have earned him \$104,068.80.

Now let's say this Marine got promoted to first sergeant on Jan. 1, 2004. He would have received a yearly base salary of \$39,337.20 (1stSgt over 24 years active service) for a three-year total of \$118,011.60.

Now let's figure that after three years he was promoted to rank of sergeant major on Jan. 1, 2007. For his next four years (sergeant major over 26 years active service) he earns a total of \$194,918.40 (yearly base salary of \$48,729.60).

Now, totaling up 20 years of sergeant's major retirement earnings (based on 75% of \$4,060 base pay) it comes to \$730,944.

Positive assets for that staff sergeant for 30 years (retirement only) would be \$426,222.

Negative assets for him (only base pay and retirement pay) over the same 30-year time frame would be \$104,068.80 lost as active duty gunny (three years base pay only); \$118,011.60 lost as active duty first sergeant (three years base pay only); \$194,918.40 lost as active duty sergeant major (four years base pay only); and \$730,944 lost as 30-year retired sergeant major pay (for 20 years).

That one DUI (using my 30-year example) ended up costing that Marine and his family a minimum of \$750,000 dollars! That school of hard knocks lesson has to hurt even worse than an electric fence experience! Think about that the next time you want to drink and drive.

## ATTENTION COMMANDERS

The Flight Jacket can help give you a wider audience than your squadron formation. The Flight Jacket staff encourages commanders, officers-in-charge, chaplains, senior enlisted leaders or anyone with a command message to submit commentaries, photographs or other content. Story submissions can be sent by mail to: FJ Editor, H&HS PAO PO Box 452013, San Diego, CA 92145; by fax to 577-6001 ATTN: FJ Editor; or by e-mail to [ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil](mailto:ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil).

Ad Space



Jason Barber speaks to Marines on the realities of drunken driving Friday in the station theater here. His tragic story explains how his choice to drive drunk killed his little brother, Aaron. Photo by Cpl. Mike Camacho

## Guest speaker drives home realities of drunken driving

By Cpl. Mike Camacho

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Anxious for their weekend to begin, many Marines sat restlessly in the station theater Friday, as they waited for yet another lecture on the evils of drunken driving. None, it seemed, were ready to hear what guest speaker Jason Barber was about to tell them. "Drinking and driving is not an accident. It's a choice!" said the 33-year-old Phelan native during his speech.

Barber travels throughout the country crusading against drinking and driving speaking to mostly students in middle schools, high schools and some colleges. The health promotions department of Marine Corps Community Services here arranged his appearance March 16.

Barber's life changed Sept. 15, 1991. He was spending time with his family in Victorville after being away for several years while serving in the Army and working on crab boats in Alaska. His parents were vacationing in Laughlin, Nev. so he decided to spend time with his younger brother.

Barber was preparing to play for the Victorville Community College football team, and his brother, Aaron Barber, was playing for the Serrano High School team. Both looked forward to spending the weekend together.

"I thought I would be the cool big brother and take my young brother out drinking," said Barber with a tint of emotion. "He didn't do drugs, smoke or drink. He just wanted to spend time with me."

Yet a drunken driver killed Aaron, Barber said, holding a photo of his brother. "Here's a picture of my brother and the person who killed him," Barber said, displaying another photo. "Me." As he revealed this tragedy, the theater full of Marines grew silent.

That tragic night, after drinking several beers, one of his friends challenged him to a race in their trucks. He accepted. Racing at speeds near 90 mph, Barber and his brother thought they were sharing a moment. It

didn't last. On the way back Barber tried to pass a truck hauling a boat. He veered too far, over-corrected and hit the truck.

"My truck tumbled over several times," said Barber. "I heard my little brother make a noise – it was him hitting the windshield. After the truck stopped rolling, the first thing I noticed was my brother wasn't in the car anymore." 15-year-old Aaron had been ejected from the truck. Aaron's left arm was severed. His legs were badly broken and he had a hole around his stomach area.

"Aaron was dead," said Barber. "I dropped next to him and started screaming. I couldn't believe this was happening." Barber attempted to kill himself, but was stopped

by one of his friends, he said. He spent five days in the hospital, getting out just in time for his little brother's funeral.

Barber could barely make it through the services. "He loved me," said Barber. "He completely trusted me and I killed him."

After Barber gave his story to the theater full of Marines, many got up to shake his hand and thank him for his courage.

Barber was convicted of vehicular manslaughter for the death of his little brother, and sent to state prison on a six-year sentence. He was released in 1995 after serving three and a half years. Barber now has spent nine years sober.

In the time since his prison release, Barber has been given the opportunity to meet three other families who have suffered similar losses because of drunken driving. These families allow Jason to tell their story along with his own in hopes that other families will not ever have to endure the pain that they are forced to live with. Spreading this message is what Jason now does full time. Last year he spoke to 25,000 teenagers and young adults, his goal is to double that number this school year.

"If this man's story is what it takes for some Marines to not get behind the wheel when drunk then I'll sit in a hundred of these," said Lance Cpl. Michael J. Prefontaine, help desk clerk, Marine Air Control Group 38.

## Chief of Police visits Miramar

By Cpl. Mike Camacho

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Former Marine and San Diego's Chief of Police David Bejarano was the guest of honor during the Law Enforcement Mess Night, March 15, in the officers club here.

"With him being the chief of police and a former Marine, it made a perfect combination for him to be our guest of honor," said Gunnery Sgt. Douglas N. Baucum, president of the mess and military policeman here.

Chief Bejarano spent three years in the Corps and was meritoriously promoted to the rank of sergeant before leaving. He accredits the Marine Corps for much of his success. "I think the passion to always strive to be the best is something that being a Marine is all about. If a Marine keeps that state of

mind they will always be successful," He said at the mess night.

Mess Night is a Marine Corps tradition that dates back to after World War II, and has become one of the Corps' time honored customs. It is a formal dinner for Marines that builds camaraderie and esprit de corps.

"This is my third mess night. It's awesome, and is something that only Marines can understand," said Cpl. Donald W. Zoerb, military policeman. "This is what makes Marines stay in the Corps for 30 years."

Staff Sgt. Richard Hernandez Jr., vice president of the mess and military policeman here, said that mess nights are quite a learning experience for those who have yet to experience the tradition. "It's extremely important for Marines to know and understand why we call ourselves a brotherhood."



As the guest of honor for Miramar's Law Enforcement Mess Night, former Marine and San Diego's Chief of Police David Bejarano gives military policeman words of inspiration March 15 at the officers club here. Photo by Cpl. Mike Camacho

## TRICARE offers Senior Pharmacy Program

By Sgt. A.C. Strong

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Medicare-eligible military beneficiaries 65 years of age and over will have access to the TRICARE Senior Pharmacy Program, April 1.

Created by the 2001 National Defense Authorization Act, the TRICARE Senior Pharmacy Program allows Medicare eligible beneficiaries to obtain low-cost prescription medications from military hospital and clinic pharmacies, the national Mail Order Pharmacy, and TRICARE network and non-network civilian pharmacies.

Medicare-eligible military services beneficiaries 65 and older are eligible for TSPP if registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System. In addition, ben-

eficiaries turning 65 on or before April 1, do not have to enroll in Medicare Part B to receive the TSPP benefits. However, the Department of Defense encourages enrolling in Medicare Part B to facilitate comprehensive health care and to ensure involvement in future TRICARE benefits beginning, Oct. 1.

Enrollment information in Medicare Part B is available from the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213. The open enrollment period is Jan. 1 to March 31 annually, for an effective date of July 1 of the concurrent year.

Information about the TRICARE Senior Pharmacy Program is available by calling the toll-free Help Line at 877-DOD-MEDS (877-363-6337). In addition, information is available on the TRICARE Management Activity Web site at [www.tricare.osd.mil](http://www.tricare.osd.mil).

Ad Space



# Devil Fish train to prevent post-apoc



Cpl. Doug Peters, MALS-11 equipment decontamination team supervisor, quickly dons his MOPP suit after hearing the warning blast from an air horn. Peters and the MALS-11 NBC platoon performed an NBC decontamination operation on the flight line to practice its NBC skills. *Photo by Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.*



Sgt. Rodney Munoz, MALS-11 monitor survey team leader, marches his Marines to a simulated NBC exposed site on the flight line. Although it was only an exercise, the Marines had to practice as if the attack was real so they could hone their survival skills. *Photo by Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.*



MALS-11 Marines performed as if the decontamination exercise were a real attack. It is the squadron's goal to have 25 percent of all squadron Marines officially trained in the skills of NBC warfare. *Photo by Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.*



# Apocalyptic future

By Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

The sky is black even though it's past noon. Nuclear-rain clouds generate acidic rain, killing off all vegetation. Cars of the 21st century sit darkly still on the crumpled highways of what used to be the beautiful city of San Diego, their drivers rest inside, waiting for a never-ending traffic jam to clear. What few people remain, live in small cave-like shacks or the remains of structures known as sky-scrapers; the boils on their bodies fester and ooze as they search for sources of uncontaminated food.

Fortunately, this scenario may never happen. The Marines of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 are taking measures to ensure that they are all up to speed on preparations for an nuclear, biological and chemical attack. March 15 "Devil Fish" Marines practiced an NBC decontamination operation, fine-tuning skills which will be used during an actual NBC attack.

"This squadron leads the Marine Corps in this type of NBC training," said 1st Lt. Johnny Deas, MALS-11 NBC officer-in-charge. "Too many people don't think an attack on this country is possible – that no one can touch us. Other countries are prepared for such attacks. We don't want our Marines to be complacent."

The Marines met on the flight line between Hangars one and two with their NBC gear – Mission-Oriented Protective Posture suit and M-17A1/A2 gas masks – in hand. They simulated being in their own work environments when Deas received the call that they were now in Threat Condition 1 – the enemy has NBC weapon capability. He passed the word to the monitor-survey and equipment-decontamination team leaders. They, in turn, spread the word to their Marines.

After a few minutes of heightened awareness, and the realization on the Marines' part that an NBC attack could happen, Deas again received information from the control center that the probability of an attack is medium. Again, the information was passed through the chain of command, and the NBC platoon went into MOPP Level 2 – wearing the MOPP suit and protective over-boots.

The Marines remained calm and began to prepare themselves for the possible horror of an NBC attack, when control center informed Deas that an attack was imminent. Three blasts from an air horn sounded and the NBC platoon quickly dressed in MOPP Level 4 – wearing their MOPP suits, overboots, gloves and their gas masks with the hood closed. Deas pointed out that in an actual attack, all of MALS-11 would go to MOPP Level 4.

"Our squadron knows this is what they're going to hear," said Deas about the air horn blasts. "Too many people don't think this is possible, that there's no one who can attack us. That's why we practice – we don't want our Marines to be complacent."

Once they were just getting used to wearing their suits in the hot California sun, the control center informed Deas of an NBC attack source on the flight line. Deas launched his monitor-survey team – nine Marines led by team leader Sgt. Rodney Munoz. Broken down into teams of the three, each team used a chemical agent monitor, a chemical data sheet and other tools to assess what type of NBC agent was used in the attack. Munoz's team discovered that "nerve gas" was used in the attack and relayed that information quickly to Deas.

The mission complete, Deas recalled the team and sent them on a one-mile forced march to a MOPP gear exchange site. Here the Marines decontaminated each other from the deadly "nerve agent" and simulated switching to new MOPP suits, which would be done in an actual attack.

The second stage of the decontamination exercise was to have another team decontaminate a High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle. Although the vehicle was already staged, the scenario was that the vehicle had just come back from the flight line loading bombs and became contaminated by the nerve agent. All of the flaps and doors on the HMMWV were first closed to prevent as much of the water as possible from getting inside the vehicle. The vehicle decontamination team then cleaned the vehicle from top to bottom and front to back. After the



After careful testing by the monitor survey team, it was learned that the flight line had been exposed to a simulated nerve agent. Devil Fish Marines actively practice NBC drills like this one each quarter. Photo by Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.

team finished, Deas had them march to their gear exchange site and decontaminate each other, again simulating putting on fresh suits.

Two hours after the first warnings of an attack came through control central, Deas formed the NBC platoon to conduct the selective unmasking procedures. Two Marines were selected and the procedure began and was followed to the letter, although the times were shortened to about 20 seconds in between stages. Once the procedure was complete and it was determined that the air was indeed safe to breathe once again, a single air horn blast filled the air – the signal to unmask was given to the remaining NBC Marines.

"My job as a team leader is to make sure my team is set, ready and knows what is going on," said Munoz after an NBC knowledge demonstration. "Anyone can come into this country and do whatever they want. That's why we are here – in case of an attack."

Lance Cpl. Jason M. Virnig, MALS-11 equipment decontamination team member, expressed the importance of knowing as much as the team members about the effects of NBC

weapons and procedures.

"Everyone needs to know it," he said. "There may be a situation where your team leader can't make it. There needs to be Marines who can take over in the event that happens."

Deas said the goal is to have 25 percent of the squadron Marines sent to the NBC school so they can have secondary military occupational specialties in the NBC field. He also said the NBC program has stepped up to a more proactive approach.

Ad Space



# Marines star in Fox show ‘Boot Camp’

By Sgt. Steven Williams

*Marketing and Public Affairs, RS San Diego*

SAN DIEGO — Four former Marine drill instructors donned campaign covers again for the new Fox reality-style television series “Boot Camp,” set to debut March 28.

The drill instructors took 16 contestants, looking to win \$500,000, into a whole new world.

“As soon as I saw that white bus come in, it really didn’t matter that they were contestants,” said Gunnery Sgt. Annette Taylor, a “Boot Camp” drill instructor, actually stationed at Camp Pendleton. “They were just like my recruits and candidates.”

“We became their mother, father, scholar, teacher, and psychologist all built into one,” added Chief Warrant Officer 2 Tony Rosenbun, another “Boot Camp” drill instructor, also from Camp Pendleton.

The Marine Corps assisted Fox in finding the drill instructors to “highlight the effectiveness of Marine Corps leadership, discipline and motivation,” said Capt. Shawn D. Haney, deputy director of the Motion Picture & TV Liaison Office in

Los Angeles. “Key elements of the show will be the DIs’ insights and their on-camera comments during training. Each episode will feature some sort of mission in which teamwork is essential.”

The Corps also added two amphibious assault vehicles and two High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles to the production.

The drill instructors pushed the contestants through seven missions and critiqued them upon completion. Eight episodes document these trials and tribulations as they vie for the cash prize. But, according to the drill instructors, they got more than a shot at money.

“They came there with greed of getting a pot of \$500,000,” said Taylor. “But, they left there gaining much more than money

could ever buy them.”

“We touched them,” said Sgt. Maj. David A. Francisco, a “Boot Camp” drill instructor from Recruiting Station San Diego. “We changed those people’s lives. If we did our job right, 99 percent of them are changed forever.”

Francisco and Rosenbun said the values and lessons the contestants learned will carry over to the prospective Marine Corps applicants and their parents watching the show.

“I think there are a lot of people out there who want that same change,” said Francisco.

“This will be a positive tool for the Marine Corps because of the success stories,” said Rosenbun. “Each of them learned something and gained



**CWO-2 Tony Rosenbun’s bark is just as ferocious as his bite as he yells commands that had 16 Fox “Boot Camp” contestants scrambling for their lives. The eight-show series is set to begin airing March 28.**

*Photo by Sgt. Steven Williams*

something. They got self-respect and self-confidence.”

However, he also stressed that he hopes the viewing audience is able to separate the differences between television’s “Boot Camp” and actual Marine Corps recruit training. “When the recruits of TV “Boot Camp left, they went back to whatever job it was they had. They weren’t signing a contract for Uncle Sam.”

They also didn’t get the warfare training Marine recruits get. In fact, there was never any objective to mold them in any way like fleet Marines are formed. The Marines agreed that their primary goal was to instill the basics of teamwork, mission accomplishment and individual improvement.

The Marines each returned to their respective duty stations to continue their leadership.

Francisco is the sergeant major for Recruiting Station San Diego. He spent the majority of his career with 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton before he became a drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego. There, Francisco went all

See **Boot**, page 11

## Wildlife around station does best when left alone

By Robert S. Taylor

*Environmental Management, MCAS Miramar*

Spring has sprung! Marine Corps Air Station Miramar has a lot of developed and undeveloped land where wildlife, including birds, coexist with us. Because many birds are now, or very soon will be, laying eggs and raising young, now is the time when they are most vulnerable to disturbance. Wildlife can survive and do well on station if disturbance is not constant. They have adapted to living with our training mission and many, will quietly hide and let Marines pass.

Young birds and other wildlife found alone are not abandoned; they should always be left undisturbed. Their parents must leave the nest to feed themselves and to find food for them. When young are threatened, their parents expend energy defending them, which could otherwise be used for feeding and caring for their young. Behaviors that parents use, such as the broken wing display to lead predators away or diving onto intruders to drive them off, keep outsiders away from their young. However, such instinctive actions expend significant amounts of energy.

In the meantime, the chicks may suffer from hypothermia as they attempt to hide or may starve while the adults try to distract or lead intruders away. Often, the adults

will not return to their nests for long periods of time to avoid leading predators back to their nests or young.

Bird conservation requires extra care during the breeding season. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act was enacted as a result of reduced bird populations in the early 1900s when birds were being shot as commercial commodities for their meat, decorative feathers, down and eggs. The act prohibits killing or capturing migratory birds or destroying their eggs and nests. However, during lawful hunting seasons in the fall, some migratory birds can be hunted. In rare instances, nests, eggs and individual birds may be removed and relocated by qualified personnel possessing special permits. The most common violation of the act is the destruction of bird nests, which usually kills young chicks or destroys unhatched eggs.

Almost every bird you see on the station, whether owls, crows, sparrows or gulls, is a migratory bird and is fully protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Some birds don’t mind nesting around humans. Beginning as early as late February some bird species begin building nests.

The most common nuisance migratory birds on the station are the Mourning dove, House finch and Cliff swallow. They nest on structures, such as bridges,

hangar doors, under roof eaves or inside mechanical equipment. Bird nests containing eggs or young birds can only be removed by individuals with a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service permit.

If nests are built and become occupied in motorized vehicles or mechanical equipment, this equipment could be rendered inoperative until the young birds have left the nest or are legally relocated. This could have a significant impact on military maintenance and operations.

There are measures you can take to prevent bird nests from forming. You can block access or hose nest sites with a stream of water during the construction phase to discourage nest building.

However, these preventive measures can only be taken before the nests are complete and eggs are laid. Once there are eggs or young in the nest, they must be left alone. After the eggs have hatched and young have left the nest, usually late August or September, the area or equipment may be cleaned up and preventative measures taken to deny bird access for the following year.

For assistance with bird and bird nest problems in equipment, hangars or buildings contact the trouble desk at 577-1609 or 577-1619.



**Areas like the old recreational fishing pond in Rose Canyon are home to a plethora of wildlife. Such areas also offer an attraction to man, causing clashes between him and the environment more likely.** *Photo courtesy of Environmental Management*

Ad Space



Courts Martial

Sgt. Ryan J. Shaughnessy with 3d Marine Aircraft Wing was found guilty at a general court martial for violations under the Uniform Code of Military Justice of Article 112a, wrongful use of ketamine, LSD, ecstasy, marijuana and distribution of ecstasy, and Article 134, wrongfully solicit and dereliction of duty. He received a reduction to E-1, nine months confinement, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and a dishonorable discharge.

Lance Cpl. Scott E. Scrivener with Marine Air Control Group 38 was found guilty at a special court martial for violations under the UCMJ of Article 112a, wrongful use of ecstasy and LSD, possession of ecstasy and distribution of ecstasy. He received a reduction to E-1, forfeiture of \$694 per month for four months, four months confinement and a bad-conduct discharge.

Lance Cpl. Matthew A. Perry with MACG-38 was found guilty at a special court martial for violations under the UCMJ of Article 90, willfully disobeying a lawful order and Article 92, failure to obey a lawful order. He received a reduction to E-1, 90 days of confinement, forfeiture of \$695 per month for three months and a bad-conduct discharge.

Lance Cpl. David J. Rimel with Headquarters Squadron, Marine Aircraft Group 11 was found guilty at a special court martial for violations under the UCMJ of Article 81, wrongful possession of cocaine and Article 112a, wrongful use of ecstasy, marijuana, cocaine, psilocybin, methamphetamines, distribution of marijuana, psilocybin, introduction of psilocybin and importation of marijuana. He received a reduction to E-1, six months confinement, forfeiture of \$1000 to U.S. treasury, and a bad-conduct discharge.

Pvt. Clinton A. Anders with MAG-16 was found guilty at a special court martial for violations under the UCMJ of two counts of Article 112a, wrongful use of methamphetamine and Article 134, breaking restriction. He received 100 days confinement, forfeiture of \$695 per month for three months and a bad-conduct discharge.

Pvt. Damon M. Marichalar with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 was found guilty at a special court martial for violations under the UCMJ of Article 91, disobeying a lawful order, Article 92, failure to obey an order, Article 112a, wrongful distribution, use and importation of methamphetamine, wrongful use of cocaine, and Article 121, larceny. He received 125 days confinement and a bad-conduct discharge.

Pfc. Donald J. Buechner with Marine Aircraft Group 11 was found guilty at a special court martial for violations under the UCMJ of Article 86, unauthorized absence, Article 121, larceny, three counts of Article 123, forgery, and Article 92, failure to obey an order or regulation. He received a reduction to E-1, confinement for 125 days and a bad-conduct discharge.

Volunteer opportunities let Marines give back

By Cpl. Rob Henderson

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Marines are fortunate. They always have teammates ready to play pick-up football or a coach ready to offer assistance in physical fitness. Many people are not so fortunate. Many children never get to experience the thrill of participating in team sports.

The Greater San Diego Inner-City Games is seeking volunteers who are interested in sports and education centered programs.

“Our goal is to create an environment that will develop friendships based on caring and trust. We aim to enhance self-respect,

strengthen skills and promote healthy values. One of the most important ways we do this is by introducing youth to positive role models,” said Janey Gidion, the Volunteer Coordinator for GSDICG.

GSDICG offers a variety of programs to strengthen children in competitive and educational areas. One-day sports clinics are held year round, and they consist of physical, interactive, instructional, and educational components designed to coincide with the current seasonal sport. The organization is looking for individuals with experience in a particular sport.

GSDICG also offers volunteer opportu-

nities for people who are interested in helping children improve their reading skills. “Readers” are volunteers who work with youth from 2nd through 9th grade reading to the children from a variety of books. The ideal candidate would be available for about one hour during school hours.

“It is with your (volunteers) time and effort that we are able to continue to offer these programs to the youth of San Diego County,” said Gidion.

GSDICG also has opportunities for Marines to volunteer as guest speakers, office clerks, and special events workers.

For details call Gidion at 642-9221.

NOW TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Do you have news? Did you take a newsworthy photo? Would you like to see your byline in the Flight Jacket? The newspaper staff encourages Marines to submit commentaries, editorials or other articles or photographs. Story submissions can be sent by mail to: FJ Editor, H&HS PAO PO Box 452013, San Diego, CA 92145; by fax to 577-6001 ATTN: FJ Editor; or by e-mail to ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil.

Ad Space



**MOSC offers scholarships**

Miramar’s Marine Officers’ Spouses’ Club offers college and technical school scholarships to high school seniors, high school graduates and family members of active-duty servicemembers of MCAS Miramar and its tenant commands. Family members of retired and deceased servicemembers residing in the Miramar area are also eligible.

The MOSC will award one \$1,000 scholarship from the United Services Planning Association/ Independent Research Agency Scholarship Foundation. They will also award one \$1,000 and three \$500 MOSC sponsored scholarships.

The USPA/IRA scholarship is restricted to dependent children. The application deadline for the USPA/IRA scholarship is March 31.

The MOSC deadline is April 15 and is open to all eligible family members. Applications postmarked after the deadline will not be considered.

Applications are available from local high school guidance counselors or by sending a self-addressed, stamped business envelope to:

Marine Officers’ Spouses’ Club  
 MCAS Miramar  
 Lynn Holtzhouser, Scholarship Chairperson  
 P.O. Box 45078  
 San Diego, CA 92145-0078

**TRICARE stops co-payments**

Active duty family members enrolled in TRICARE Prime no longer have to pay co-payments as of April 1. This effects civilian care provided by the selected primary care manager, referred specialty care – including mental health – and hospitalization.

The change does not apply to co-payments for pharmacy or the point of service option, according to TRICARE representatives.

For more information call 800-242-6788.

**Library adds Friday story hour**

The Station Library has added an additional free preschool story hour, Fridays at 10 a.m, beginning today.

No registration is required for the free program. Preschoolers and toddlers can enjoy stories, music, and crafts geared toward their age group.

Regular story hour still takes place every Thursday at 2 p.m. Children of all ages are invited.

The library is located in the Lifelong Learning Center, in Bldg. 5305.

For more information call Addie Ross at 577-8974.

**Avoid rush hour, catch a flick**

Beat the traffic. Beginning in April, the station theater will offer The Rush Hour Quick Flick. The “Flick” is a free movie Fridays at 4:30 p.m.

For more information call 577-4126.

**Varsity Women’s softball seeks coach**

Do you have what it takes to lead the Varsity Women’s softball team to victory? This may be your chance. But you’d better make it quick – the season starts in April.

Interested persons should contact Lisa Keller at 577-1202 for more information.

**EFMP holds second advisory council meeting**

The second meeting for the Committee for Persons With Disabilities is at the Friendship Center, April 4, at 1:30 p.m.

This month’s meeting will cover humanitarian assignment policies highlighting the reason and purpose of the RE3 Code as well as an open forum for ideas.

During the last meeting, topics ranged from assignment to government quarters, marketing and TRICARE.

For more information or to reserve a seat, call Gunnery Sgt. Shawn Keating at 577-4098.

**Alcohol-Free Weekend**

The Miramar Semper Fit Health Promotion Office, Single Marine Program and the Great Escape invite Miramar Marines to accept the alcohol-free challenge – and a week-end of fun challenges, April 6-8.

For more information call 577-6171/6283 or 7963 for details.

**Spring Carnival ‘01**

The annual Spring Carnival will be held April 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Youth Sports Complex. This FREE event includes children’s rides, games, food, entertainment and photos with the Easter Bunny for ages 2-12 years.

Donations of nonperishable food items during the event automatically enter you in a drawing for great prizes at approximately 1:45 p.m.

For more information about the carnival call 577-6365.

**Family Fun Run kicks off April activities**

April is Child Abuse Prevention month and Month of the Military Child.

The Family Fun Run kicks off the Spring Carnival highlighting Child Abuse Preven-

Today		Wednesday	
<b>Erin Brokovich</b>	(R) 6:30 p.m.	<b>Sweet November</b>	(PG-13) 6:30 p.m.
<b>Save the Last Dance</b>	(PG-13) 8:30 p.m.	<b>Thursday</b>	
Saturday		<b>The Little Mermaid</b>	(G) 2 p.m.
<b>The Wedding Planner</b>	(PG-13) 6:30 p.m.	<b>Save the Last Dance</b>	(PG-13) 6:30 p.m.
<b>Cast Away</b>	(PG-13) 8:30 p.m.		
Sunday			
<b>The Emperor's New Groove</b>	(G) 1 p.m.		
<b>Snatch</b>	(R) 6:30 p.m.		

The station theater is equipped with a 35 mm projection system and Dolby Digital Surround Sound. All movies are free for everyone. For movie synopses see the current theater flyer or call 577-4143.

tion and awareness, April 7 at 9:30 a.m.

The course is one and a half miles with prizes awarded to all who complete the course.

Military families are encouraged to participate and make this an opportunity for some family fun time. For more information call 577-6711.

**Got a Hot Car?**

Enter your car in the Miramar Armed Forces Day Car Show May 19. Entry fee is \$15, which includes a car show T-shirt and auto dash plaque for the first 100 entries. Sign up at the Auto Hobby Shop, Bldg. 6673 (across from the Main Auto Port Service Station).

Call Mike Young at 577-1215 for more information.

**NWCA Scholarship Foundation accepting applications**

The Navy Wives Clubs of America, Inc. offers \$1,500 annual scholarships grants to eligible sons and daughters of enlisted members of the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard on active duty, retired with pay or deceased.

The NWCA awards forty scholarships annually to applicants who show bases of need for financial assistance, who have good grades and hold a current military identification card.

The deadline for applications is May 30. Applicants should send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope to the following address.

Mrs. Barbara Stead  
 NWCA Scholarship Director  
 3848 Old Colony Circle  
 Virginia Beach, VA 23452-2910

**MFD announces Charity Golf Tournament**

The Miramar Fire Department will hold its the 2nd Annual Charity Golf Tournament June 1. Carlton Oaks Country Club in Santee will hold the event which benefits the San Diego Burn Institute.

For more information call Mark Weimann at 577-6137.

**All-Marine skeet team seeks competitors**

MCCS will select a five-person, all-Marine team to compete in the Armed Forces Skeet Championship in Phoenix May 10-19.

Interested Marines must submit resumes containing command endorsement and must be National Skeet Shooting Association members.

For more information call (703) 784-9542.

**Web site links Commissary, Exchange and Pizza Pizzazz**

The MCCS Miramar Web site calendar now includes a link to the Miramar Com-

missary and Exchange in the left (blue) navigation bar, and a link to the Pizza Pizzazz menu. The movie page now offers a link to a page of movie synopsis. Other recent additions include posting MCCS NAF job listings and a page for the stationwide “News You Can Use,” making it accessible to family members.

**SGLI to increase in April**

The top rate of Servicemember’s Group Life Insurance will automatically increase to \$250,000 April 1.

The current premium payment of 80 cents per \$10,000 of coverage will continue, resulting in an additional \$4 premium being withheld from each member’s pay for SGLI. As an example, for those members who currently have the maximum coverage amount of \$200,000, the premium payment per month is \$16. With the increase in coverage, the premium will now be \$20 per month for the maximum coverage. A remark will appear on the February 2001 Leave and Earnings Statement, bringing attention to this rate increase.

If a member desires the full increased coverage of \$250,000, no action is necessary.

If any member desires a reduced amount of coverage, or no coverage that member must prepare a new VA SGLV 8286, a form that indicates a reduced amount of coverage or no coverage. This form must be prepared, signed, dated and submitted in April.

Any reduced-coverage or no-coverage requests received during this period will result in a refund of any over-collection of the premium during the month of April. The April time frame is critical. Requests for reduced SGLI coverage, or no SGLI coverage dated and received after April 30 will be processed to reduce the coverage or stop the coverage, but will not result in a refund of the maximum premium withheld for the month of April.

Questions regarding SGLI should be directed to your personnel office.

**Energy tip from the Public Works Division**

If you’re in the market for a new clothes washer, consider buying one that is Energy Star rated. You can:

- Use 50 percent less water
- Use 40 percent less energy
- Save 7,000 gallons of water per year.

Get the lint out – Clean your dryer’s lint screen after every use. Besides keeping your clothes looking good, a lint-free dryer works much more efficiently and reduces the risk of fire.

Do it for free – Use the sun to dry your clothes. It’s free, and the only energy it requires is your own.

Check your connections – Check for cracked hoses and leaky faucet connections. Either one can cause you to lose hot water every time you wash.



## **Dog,** continued from page 1

Normally, when they train their dogs they just fire over the dog's head. However, the competition required them to search out buildings and fire into them as if apprehending a suspect.

Brenneis said the hardest part for him was not getting nervous. He explained that a dog will sense his handler's emotions and if he's nervous, his dog will be also and might not perform as well.

These two Marines, along with their dogs, show that not only can leathernecks at Miramar perform, but they perform in award-winning fashion. Prior to deploying for the competition, Miramar held a competition of its own to select its top handlers, said Pantoja. All military dog handlers compete in this mock trial in the categories of: field scouts, building search, handler protection explosive or narcotic detection. Brenneis and Stacey proved to be the most qualified and were chosen for the Yuma Trials.

"We always try to send Marines to competitions, it keeps them on their toes, varies their experience and knowledge base, and it gives them extra incentive for further opportunities," said Hester. "It's comparable to

sending Marines to pistol and rifle matches, added Hester.

Pantoja said that the combined expertise of other Marines who have competed has helped improve training and therefore improve their handlers; this one contribution was what he considered key to these two Marines' success.

## **LINKS,** continued from page 4

Moving day and investing in your community are just two of the many important, spouse-related topics that are presented and discussed in a Marine Corps Family Team Building LINKS session.

Lifestyle Insights, Networking, Knowledge and Skills is a unique mentoring program designed to introduce Marine spouses to the Corps, its history, lifestyle and available resources. The program is presented in a casual setting and all Marine Corps spouses are invited to attend. Course materials, childcare and refreshments are also provided and everything is free of charge.

The next LINKS session is scheduled for April 17, 18 and 19 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. For more information or to register, please call the LINKS office today at 577-4810.

## **Education \$,** continued from page 2

ered by the program.

"It's good to use no matter what you're paying," said Finn. "Hopefully it will encourage more Marines to further their education."

According to Finn, there are other programs out there to augment educational costs based upon financial need.

"Many junior Marines, sergeants and below, apply for and are eligible for financial assistance like the Pell Grant," he said.

"Top-up" became effective as of Oct. 1 and the benefits are retroactive, according to Finn. That means anyone currently enrolled in classes that started on or after Nov. 1 can take advantage of the opportunity.

"If Marines have questions they should give us a call because each situation is different," said Finn who feels strongly about the importance of continuing education.

"Leadership should work to encourage those who want to further their education," said Finn. "(They) shouldn't stifle them. It will only improve the quality of Marines working for them."

For more information call the Lifelong Learning Center Education office at 577-1801.

## **Boot,** continued from page 8

the way from being a "hat" on the drill field to the first sergeant of Drill Instructor School at MCRD. He lives in Oceanside, with his wife and two children.

Rosenbum is a student in a 14-month course at Park University at the time. Following graduation from this course, he will return to his job as a utilities officer for Camp Pendleton. He lives in Carlsbad, with his wife and two children.

Taylor is the base equal opportunities advisor for Camp Pendleton. She spent time training both recruits and officer candidates during her time on the drill field. Now, she is working on a degree at Park University and lives aboard Camp Pendleton with her two children.

The only "Boot Camp" DI who isn't still in the Corps is Leo McSweeney, who was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in January 2000. He currently lives in Toluca Lake.

The Marines may never see those 16 contestants again, but they said just as hundreds of recruits left recruit depots different and better people from experience with their DIs, so did the contestants.

**Classifieds Space**